Obituary.

THE REV. JOHN IGNATIUS BLEASDALE, D.D.

Dr. Bleasdale was born in 1822, and was a native of Lancashire. At a very early age he was taken to Portugal, and his university training was obtained at an English College in Lisbon. In 1844 he returned to England and completed his studies at St. Mary's College, Oscott. He was ordained priest by the late Cardinal Wiseman, and for five years was garrison-chaplain at Weedon and Aylesbury. He came to Victoria in 1855, and was appointed vice-president of St. Patrick's College, where he taught experimental physics, having at an early age given his attention to this subject. He was also secretary to the Roman Catholic Archbishop. He joined the Royal Society of Victoria soon after its formation, and was for many years one of its prominent members, being in 1865 elected president. When in Portugal he had acquired an intimate knowledge of viticulture, and in the early days of wine-making in this colony he gave much valuable information on the subject, and read and published several papers of great practical importance on the wine industry. He had also an intimate knowledge of mineralogy, especially in the section of gem-stones, and he submitted frequent interesting communications thereon to this society. He was president of the first Intercolonial Exhibition in 1865, and ten years after he succeeded in procuring the establishment of a school of chemistry, assaying, and mineralogy in connection with the Public Museum, to the advancement of which institution he had steadily given his attention. He was elected in 1860 an honorary member of the Medical Society of Victoria, a distinction not until then conferred upon a non-medical man, and he occasionally read papers before that body having reference to his own special knowledge, but yet not uninteresting to the medical profession. Outside his sacerdotal duties he was well and widely known and much liked for his convivial qualities. About six years ago he left this colony for California, where he soon made himself known by the interest he showed in practical science and wine-producing. He died there about the middle of last year.

MR. WILLIAM GILLBEE, M.R.C.S., ENG.

DIED 4TH JANUARY, 1885.

MR. GILLBEE was a native of Hackney, near London, and was 60 years of age at the time of his death, which took place on the 4th of January of the present year (1885). His general education was conducted at Edinburgh, where also he attended the lectures on hospital practice qualifying him for examination by the London College of Surgeons, the diploma of which he obtained in 1848. He came to Australia in the following year, but did not then remain here, as he was attracted by the news of the gold discoveries in California, whither he repaired, and there remained two years, practising in the then unsettled mining communities of the very Far West. Returning to this part of the world, after experiencing somewhat romantic adventures both in the Pacific States and on board ship, he at once settled down in Melbourne, where he continued in the steady practice of his profession until the latter part of 1883, when his failing health induced him to visit the old country. In 1853 he was elected one of the surgeons of the Melbourne Hospital, an appointment he continued to hold for twenty-two years, and the duties of which he performed with singular fidelity. In 1855 he assisted in founding the Medical Society of Victoria, and in the same year he took a prominent part in bringing about the fusion of the Philosophical Society and the Victorian Institute, which conjointly became the Philosophical Institute, and afterwards, at a later period, the present Royal Society of Victoria. Mr. Gillbee was a member of the Council of the Royal Society for several years, and in 1864 was elected vice-president. In 1859 he was elected on the Exploration Committee, a body which had the onerous duty of directing the ill-fated Burke aad Wills Expedition. Although Mr. Gillbee was not a frequent contributor to the Transactions of this Society, he was for many years an active working member, and frequently took part in the discussions at the meetings.

In 1855 he helped to commence the *Australian Medical Journal*, a publication in which he took a warm interest, and to whose pages he was a steady contributor. In 1865 he helped to found the Medical Benevolent Association of Victoria; in 1879 he took part in establishing the Victorian Branch of the British Medical Association, of which he was chosen first President. He had in 1863 been the President of the Medical Society of Victoria. In 1853 he was one of about a dozen others who started the volunteer movement in this colony, and he eventually became Surgeon-Major of the Victorian Forces. In 1872 he was elected by a vote of the profession a member of the Medical Board of Victoria, of which, in 1878, he became President, a position he held until his death, which took place a few weeks after his return from England. He was an active and useful citizen, a good surgeon, and a genial companion.

MR. EDWARD DAVY, M.R.C.S.

Died January, 1885.

Edward Davy was born on June 6th, 1806, and received his education at a school kept by Mr. Bontflower, his maternal uncle. He was afterwards apprenticed to Mr. Wheeler, house surgeon at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and about the year 1828 became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, and soon after a member of the Society of Apothecaries. Shortly after this he bought a business at 390 Strand, London, and began to trade as an operative chemist under the name of Davy and Co. In 1836 he published a small work, entitled *Experimental Guide to Chemistry*; in this book he mentions several modifications of instruments he had invented, such as "Davy's Blow-pipe," and "Davy's Improved Mercurial Trough." In 1835 he invented and patented a cement for mending broken china and glass, which was known as "Davy's Diamond Cement," and it was about this time that he first experimented on the electric telegraph. His first telegraph necessitated the employment of 24 wires, insulated from each other, but he mentions that the number of wires might be reduced to six, owing to the numerous changes which could be made upon them by combination. The source of electricity was to be the prime conductor of a frictional electrical machine; the electricity was passed into the line by depressing keys suitably arranged. At the receiving end pith balls hanging in front of the letters of the alphabet were first attracted and then repelled from brass balls, to which the respective line wires were led, their discharge being effected by means of suitable earth connections. But this plan was not the one which Dr. Davy recommended to be put to practice; he merely described it to give a clearer insight into the principles involved. He very soon drew up a proposal for a telegraph based on the electro-magnetic properties of the voltaic current. This was to consist, like the former, of as many line wires as there were letters of the alphabet, but the number might be reduced by various combinations to which they would obviously be susceptible. He used a separate line for the alarm, and a common return wire. The ribbons or wires were to be all insulated and laid underground in a slight frame of well-varnished wood. In this telegraph, magnetic needles were to replace the pith balls, and were, on deflection by a current transmitted from the sending station through a small helix, to be caused to expose the particular letters intended to be signalled. The alarm was to consist of a small fulminate of silver caps, attached to a separate needle, which, on being deflected, dipped into the flame of a lamp and exploded. He soon saw that by employing reverse currents the number of wires might be reduced to one-half. Other very important improvements followed, enabling him at the commencement of 1837 to submit his apparatus to the test of actual experiment in Regent's Park, where, with the help of a friend, Mr. Grave, he performed many successful experiments. Becoming alarmed by hearing rumours that Professor Wheatstone was engaged on an electric telegraph, and in order to secure himself priority, he deposited with Mr. Aikin, the secretary of the Society of Arts, a sealed description of his invention in its then state. Davy then added the electrical renewer, or relay, which made his apparatus complete and practical. He had at this time most complete ideas of the capabilities of the electric telegraph, and the best mode of working the stations. A working model embodying all his improvements was shown November to December, 1837, at the Belgrave Institution, London, afterwards from December 29, 1837, to November 10, 1838, in Exeter Hall. He then invented a chemical recording telegraph, which he perfected before December 1837. He wished to take out a patent at once for this instrument, but, owing to the opposition of Cooke and Wheatstone, the specification was not sealed until July 4, 1838. In February 1838 he removed from 390 Strand to 199 Fleet-street, and for some time persistently endeavoured to get the public or the Great Western Railway Company to take the matter up. In 1839 he landed in South Australia, having during the years 1837 to 1838 frequently for private reasons intended leaving England. For the remainder of his life he resided in these colonies, busying himself in acclimatising trees, grasses, &c., the seeds of which he obtained in England. His leisure he filled up with writing newspaper articles on hygiene and other subjects. He also invented and patented "A plan for saving fuel during the process of smelting ores," and was Assay Master of the Melbourne Mint from 1853 to 1855. Davy then tried his hand at farming, and finally settled down at Malmsbury to practise his profession of surgeon. He was highly esteemed and respected in the district, and, to the great regret of all who knew him, died in January, 1885, at the age of 73. Not long prior to his death he had been elected an honorary member of this Society, and also of the Society of Telegraph Engineers, London, thus living long enough to see his claims as an inventor of the electric telegraph recognised both in England and in his adopted home.

He was one of the original founders of the Philosophical Institute of Victoria—one of the parent bodies afterwards merged in this Society—and contributed several papers to its Transactions.

JOHN FILE BAILEY.

Died June, 1884.

Mr. Bailey, who was one of the most successful and intelligent collectors of natural history specimens that we have ever had in Victoria, is deserving of remembrance by the scientific world in Australia for the contributions with which he enriched many of our public institutions. He had to contend against many difficulties when young, and all that he knew was acquired by the most honourable devotion to a life-long course of self-instruction. When a lad he served as signal-boy with the army at the Crimea, and it was there, on foreign shores, that his love of making collections of shells and fossils was first developed.

After coming to this colony he constantly filled up the leisure left him by a laborious and exacting business in the collection of specimens, and he was one of the most active and zealous workers in the ranks of the Field Naturalist Club.

He has rendered most material assistance to some of our leading scientific writers in the colonies, and their gratitude has found its usual mode of expression in the designation of species by the name of the collector. Purpura Bayleana, for instance, is figured in our own Transactions, Vol. XVII., p. 83. One of Mr. Bailey's most prominent discoveries was that of a fossil species of whale hitherto unknown, and described in Victorian *Palæontology* (Plate XLV., fig. 1, 2) under the name Physetodon Baileyi.

Mr. Bailey's death was occasioned by his devotion to his scientific pursuits. In the search for fossil remains in a newly opened bed in the rocks at Cheltenham, he entered the water and continued his researches while wet; the result being a chill which caused death in a few days.